of milk. She is not permitted to read, sew, or to do anything that will 'arouse or stir the blood.' 846

Omens are read from the position of mongoloid spots on the newborn baby's body. They are said to represent marks put on in a previous existence and their presence proves that the child was then a human being. A blue spot on the foot presages a life of travel. Any marks leading from the right shoulder to the left hip, the line that the royal riband takes, treditionally indicated a royal future; today, however, in the absence of royalty in Burma, such marks merely forecast a 'great' future for the child. 787 845

A child is constantly watched from the time of birth for signs of whose reincarnation it represents. This is a constant topic in the family conversations. 775

Any disfigurement in a newborn child is regarded as a carry-over of the parents' store of demerit, as well as the child's, from earlier existences. It is regarded with a sense of shame and sorrow.

Although multiple births are neither preferred nor desired, they are not looked upon with any marked anxiety nor are there any supernatural means employed to prevent them. 854 751

A number of things are done by parents to protect the newborn baby from malevolent influences. Before it is a month old, a tiger bone should be ground on a stone, together with a little water, and mixed with honey. This is fed to the child to ward off a mysterious infant illness associated with the tiger. A connection is believed to exist between the tiger and convulsions; some parents place a tiger skin under the mattress of the baby's bed to guard against such illness. A knife similarly placed is said to protect against illness in general.

To insure good health and well-being for the child, a white thread over which certain prayers have been recited may be given by a Buddhist monk and tied around the baby's wrists. People should refrain from making admiring remarks about a baby's growth; if they do so, the thread may be left on the baby's wrists to neutralize the harm that may come.

When the stump of the child's umbilical cord has dried and fallen off, it is kept and used as a medicine for any illness that befalls the child. A little of it is ground up and mixed with water for such purposes. [846]

A very close connection is believed to exist between mother and child during the nursing period. Certain observances are necessary. The mother must not eat tomatoes at this time, for they may appear in the baby's stools; for the same reason, she must abstain from green vegetables. Any falling out of her hair during the nursing stage is said to be caused by bubbles blown into her by the suckling baby. To prevent the milk supply from drying up, the nursing mother avoids fruits of astringent quality, such as pomegranates and buds of the banyan. She must also take care not to allow milk to fall on the floor and dry. 853

The baby is weaned very gradually, beginning at the age of about nine months to a year in most cases, although some children may be given the breat occasionally up to the age of two or three years. Weaning is facilitated by the mother's application of a bitter substance to her breasts. 862

recognized as over-stimulated by anxieties. "Don't talk my gall into disorder" is a common reaction to calamity tales. 158 753

The weather is important is maintaining health. Changeable weather as during the late part of the Monsoon season is generally unhealthy and gives rise to pulmonary disorders. One should provide head protection (through covering or shade from umbrella) from the sun's rays - which cause headaches by melting the brain. Colds come from getting wet in the rain resulting from the lack of sufficient bodily heat. MIEH HNGME (earth-vapour) which rises as a steam in the early morning or after sudden rains is unhealthful in causing sore eyes and other inflamations. The"steam of the body" healthfully goes out in ordinary bathing and adds to one's comfort. Heat is a key factor in health and sickness being readily discerned as causes of local or general infection. The additional concept of "like producing like" helps explain the above beliefs. 753 132

The odor of AH HNYAW (fried food) is especially dangerous to babies and persons in a weakened condition. When frying, which will create extensive fumes, is to be undertaken the cook must give warning to the neighbourhood so that susceptible ones can be protected. Such persons take refuge behind the thick, cloth mosquito nets. Many heated arguments take place in our servants' quarters when the Indian fried food fumes carry over to the Burmese apartments. It is observed that this danger applies peculiarly to the Burmese - Chinese are also exempt since they are seen to cook with babies strapped on their backs. [252] [186]

Parts of the body are cared for with special ingredients. The eyes are cleaned with pure water or coconut water. Oil is frequently dropped into the ears through a feather quill. The mouth and teeth are cleaned with salt. Bitter foods heap keep the stomach fit. 515 751

Babies up to 1 year are fed on mother's milk or cow's milk. After one, rice chewed by the mother "to make it digestible" is added with some dried fish. After two, the child can chew its own rice, have a little meat, but no hot condiments. After five the child eats the same foods as the adults but is not allowed sour foods as this will "lessen the weight". After 16 or 17, this restriction is 853 ● 561 262

23: Brant & Mi Mi Khaing E, I-5 (1949-1950)1951
AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

quite frequently help in rearing their grandchildren, telling them stories and teaching them the Buddhist scriptures.

THE LIFE CYCLE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Birth and Infancy. When a woman is pregnant her dreams are considered especially significant. She is expected to remember those of her dreams that concern what her child will be like. The welfare of the child is forecast by some dreams: a dream of only one of things that normally are paired, such as earrings, bodes ill, possibly death, of the child in infancy; a dream of her viscera coming out indicates a great future for the child. Persistent dreams of a particular deceased individual are indicative of whose reincarnation the child will represent. In all forebodings of ill the normal counter-measure is to consult a Buddhist monk or an astrologer, who may give the prospective mother an inscribed *mantra* (prayer) to keep or some amulet for the child to wear as protection.

Although the Burmese woman need not avoid any specific foods during her pregnancy, strong spices are regarded as harmful.

No supernatural means are employed to influence the sex of the prospective offspring. Certain signs are considered prognosticative: if the pregant woman's stomach is pointed, a boy will be born, whereas a broad, flat stomach indicates a girl is in prospect.

Pregnancy among the Burmese is considered a time of great happiness; the woman is greatly indulged and pampered by all concerned.

When the time for delivery approaches any other pregnant women in the household must depart, lest their presence impede labor. Usually the woman's mother, grandmother, or aunt, in addition to a midwife, assists at birth. A fire is prepared in the room in which delivery is to take place and is maintained for ten days.

As soon as delivery has occurred, the umbilical cord is cut with a bamboo knife. The afterbirth is wrapped in the new mother's skirt and is buried at once in the cardinal direction associated with the day of the week of the baby's birth. The mother is fed an infusion of turmeric, and turmeric paste is rubbed all over her body. She is kept close to the nearby fire and made very warm. For three days she is carefully watched to prevent her from sleeping heavily in daylight hours.

The new mother is treated as a delicate invalid for about a month and, in some cases, for as long as three months. She is fed only white rice and dried fish. A soup of garlic and banana stems is drunk to promote the flow of milk. She is not permitted to read, sew, or to do anything that will "arouse or stir the blood."

23: Brant & Mi Mi Khaing E, I-5 (1949-1950)1951
AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

A very close connection is believed to exist between mother and child during 853 262
the nursing period. Certain observances are necessary. For example, the mother must not eat tomatoes at this time, for they may appear in the baby's stools; for the same reason, she must abstain from green vegetables. Any falling out of her hair during the nursing period is said to be caused by bubbles blown into [827] her by the nursing baby. To prevent the milk supply from drying up, the nursing mother avoids fruits of astringent quality, such as pomegranates and buds of the banyan. She must also take care not to allow milk to fall on the floor and dry.

The Burmese baby is weaned very gradually, beginning at the age of nine 862 months to a year in most cases. This is facilitated by the mother's application of some bitter substance to her breasts.

From infancy an attempt is made to mold the child's features. The ears are 856 pulled outward and the bridge of the nose is pulled upward, to prevent a flat 826 nose. A protuberant, prominent forehead is disliked; to prevent it people play at bumping foreheads with the child. To elongate its neck the child is held under the chin when lifted up from its bath. After being dressed its limbs are pulled straight and it is wrapped around, to insure straight growth. A baby girl's nipples are squeezed to prevent her having a large bosom.

Naming. The Burmese believe that one's name can influence the course of 551 events in life; therefore the name of a child is chosen with care. Burmese personal names consist of monosyllables that are selected in a rather intricate manner. The thirty-three characters of the alphabet are traditionally divided into seven groups, each corresponding to a day of the week. The first syllable in a personal name begins with a letter belonging to the group of letters assigned to the particular day of the week on which the child was born. Another syllable begins with a letter belonging to a day that is considered congenial to the day of birth. In the urban centers the tendency nowadays is to follow these rules only for the first term in the name. The syllables of the name stand for qualities of character, physical beauty, various gems, wealth or prosperity. Boys' names usually denote strength, success or brilliance, while grace, beauty, tenderness, and various precious stones are the most common meanings of girls' names. A son is never named syllable for syllable after his father, for this is considered disrespectful and an obstruction to each other's prosperity. There is also a tendency to avoid naming children after deceased relatives. Terms indicating large numbers, such as million, *lakh* (one hundred thousand), sometimes appear in the names of both sexes. An interesting contemporary example is the comic strip heroine of a leading Rangoon daily newspaper, Than Than, literally "Million Million."

The name of the child is rather informally conferred by means of a feast to 553